

• The Radiant Centre •

A JOURNAL OF SUCCESS

"WE STAND BEFORE THE SECRET OF THE WORLD, THERE WHERE BEING
PASSES INTO APPEARANCE AND UNITY INTO VARIETY."—Emerson.

AUGUST, 1901

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EDITORIAL NOTES.*

A GREAT tragedy has convulsed the nation, and that tragedy has revealed to us, as possibly nothing else could have done, the beauty and glory of a human life. From the moment when President McKinley was pierced by the deadly bullet until he passed calmly out into the great universal, his every act was one of wonderful nobility, sweetness, patience and fortitude. Even for his assassin he had the kindly word: "Poor fellow, he did not know what he was doing." I could but think how like that was to the Christ utterance: "Father, forgive them, they know not what they do."

Whatever may be said of President McKinley's policy, and of that I am not prepared to judge, I know this—In his breast there dwelt a Godlike heart, and I also know that a man who for long years could be so true and tender to a suffering wife, who could be so uniformly kind and considerate to all in his household, who had only love in his heart for all mankind, could not be indifferent to the welfare of the nation. I also believe that he worked for that welfare to the end.

We have never had a President who was so generally loved and so universally regretted as William McKinley. All parties and all creeds became as one to do him honor. I am glad that humanity was stirred to its depths by the great love that found expression in his life and that strong men wept as they stood beside his bier. All honor to them for those tears. The world is not hopelessly corrupt while human

*The August edition is late, being published subsequent to the death of William McKinley.

hearts are thrilled by the ideal, and responsive to the good. For it was the goodness, the sublime goodness of William McKinley which endeared him to his people, and made his memory immortal.

"Write him as one who loved his fellow-men."

The more I know of life, the stronger becomes my conviction that nothing better can be said of any man. When a love reaches out beyond family ties (though including them) and takes the entire human family in its embrace, there is nothing grander, nothing better.

And it makes for happiness, too, dear friends. The more we drop our selfish little aversions to people and our critical thoughts concerning them, the more bars we take down between our souls and the sunlight.

Oh, yes, you know all this; you have heard it again and again. Very true. But have you put it in practice?

If you have not, and if you have a grudge against any creature in the world, then put up with your rheumatism, with your dyspepsia and the thousand and one ills that are making your life wretched, for your body is the living record of your thought.

Your husband is a brute? Well, even brutes have been amenable to the law of kindness. Perhaps, after all, he may not be so much of a brute as he seems to you. There is just a chance that he is not. Give him the benefit of the chance.

You need not make any rabid demonstrations of affection. Don't rush at him with a frantic kiss and embrace, because you are bound to be loving. You will get repulsed if you do, because deep down in his subconscious mind there is a long record against you. He does not remember perhaps all the little, mean, sarcastic things which you have hurled at him, but each one is lying there ready to bear witness against you when called up in the tribunal.

Don't have any tribunal. Don't have any raking-up of old scores. Don't try to set yourself right in his eyes. Just drop the whole thing and go back in your mind to the far away past before the trouble between you began. Go way back to those heavenly days of courtship and early married life and try to think of this hard, stern-eyed man as the sweet, tender young lover of the long ago. But he is so changed.

Yes, and so are you. Both are changed, and the years have built up a wall of division between you. Take it down if you can, little by little.

Or I should say--Melt it down by the warmth of kindly feeling. You can do that if you can not bring back the courting days, and you will both be happier for it. You can do your part, anyway, and after you have done your best, that is all you can do. If the old sweet relations will not return, don't fret over their loss, but go on being sweet and kindly in your thought, and have faith in the law of good that all will come out right in some way.

There is a chance, and a very miserable chance it is, too, that you are mismated, but there is another chance that you are not. Two souls are often held away from each other by a sort of fungus growth on one or both, and when that is removed they find they are not misfits after all. That is a fact worth considering, and a fact which is too often overlooked.

Not long ago I knew of a man who deserted his wife for another woman. The wife suffered, but was not resentful. Two years afterward the husband, lying sick and alone in a foreign country, sent for the wife and she went to him, without a reproach and with only love and forgiveness in her heart. Do you not think that in their reunion most of the fungus fell away from that man's soul? It did indeed, and the two severed ones have found a closer union.

But, boys and girls, let us not get too serious over this matter of mismating. Even if you are very sure that you have missed the right one and seem to be tied irrevocably to the wrong one. Even so, there is a great deal in life to be happy over. Sometimes I think the right one is only right because he or she is in another house, or another county, and is seen through the distance which always lends the halo of enchantment to the ideal. Near at hand the halo might not be visible. Then, of course, you would have to chase another halo, and so on and on to the end of the chapter.

Perhaps you like that sort of thing. If you do I have nothing to say. I am talking only for the benefit of those who are placed where they can not get out to chase halos. To those who are held by claims of honor and consideration and unselfishness, in places where they would otherwise not choose to be. To such I would say that there is a deep peace underlying such a course which is worth all else and is its own reward. To have found the one whom your soul holds dear is

to be in a glorious state of happiness, to be sure. I shall not deny that, but there are other, though possibly lesser states to which you may attain and be very comfortable indeed. And the peace which comes with right-doing is best of all.

Were you ever convalescent after a long spell of sickness, and do you remember how exquisitely happy you felt during the sweet hours when you were slowly coming back to health with cleansed blood, a clear head, a fine appetite and a general sense of well-being? Do you remember how you would lie and dream among the pillows, not caring whether school kept or not? In those hours you never thought about a soul mate. If any one had mentioned such a possibility you would have brushed the thought away like a troublesome fly. You were simply satisfied to live. You had commenced life again like a happy, healthy little child, and just to be ALIVE was good enough for you.

Now, I have a plan for you boys and girls. It is to get into this state without the preliminary fit of sickness. Get there by becoming children instead of continuing sedate men and women of thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, seventy or eighty, as the case may be. You do not need to grow silly, for children, as a rule, are not that. But throw off care and worry, unbend and be undignified. Run, skip, jump or dance if you like, anything to loosen those tense muscles and shake out the gathering lime.

There is something in your mind which corresponds to the lime, and when you shake that correspondent out of the mind your joints will become free and supple again.

The little child is very trustful. He feels that somehow and in some way he is going to be cared for. We of the New Thought should have this same faith in the Cosmic Love and Intelligence and the whole world should be our happy playground.

The body is subject to the effect of mental hallucination, and made to bear a penalty for the same. About ten years ago I took it into my head that the street cars were high and difficult to climb into. The result was that when I saw a car approaching I began to dread boarding it. As time went on I dreaded it more and more until finally to get on a car seemed almost an impossibility. I actually turned pale at the sight of one. Seeing my difficulty, the conductors would reach down and try to help me, but I was like a leaden weight, and it took a pretty strong conductor to get me into the car. I did not know what to make

of it all, but thought that it must mean a sudden breakdown, and yet there I was running up and down stairs just as rapidly as ever. What could be the matter with me? One day I said to myself—This nonsense must stop. I am going to spring on that car like a girl of sixteen—and I did.

There was nothing the matter with my muscles. There was just as much spring in them as ever. The leaden weight was in my mind, and the incident made me feel that many other hallucinations were holding us back from health and strength and filling us full of disease and decrepitude. Hallucinations which would disappear as readily as did mine before a determined effort of the will.

If people all began to fail at a certain time in life I should really think there might be a law controlling it which could not be transcended, but I see nothing of the kind, for some people are full of life and activity at an advanced age. This shows that there is not a fixed time for man's decay and death. Nature has been saying that to us as hard as she could for a long time, but we are just getting a glimpse of her meaning. It has set us thinking, and we are now beginning to ask—How long can man's life be extended? Can he altogether escape death? and—What shall he do to extend his life and to escape death, if it be possible?

Certainly the first thing to do is to banish the hallucinations which hold the body in disease and weakness, and that is an experiment which any one can try, in one way or another, just as I did, you know, in the street car experience. That happened when I knew very little of Mental Healing, and when I practiced what I knew spasmodically, with many a spell of back-sliding.

You will probably not succeed in driving out your hallucination on the first trial, especially if your disease or weakness is something of long duration and if you seem to be engulfed mentally by it. If any one is in the ocean up to the ears, and can not swim, he naturally feels that old Nep has rather the best of him unless some one throws him the saving rope. But really, if he only knew it, he could swim, paddle or float enough to keep himself above water. At least so anthropologists say. He could do this just as long as he kept calm and fearless, using instinctively the powers that are his without teaching or training. I believe that this is so, and am going to give you a little incident in proof. Once upon a time, in the not so long ago, I thought I would learn to swim, so I took lesson after lesson with an excellent master

of the art. I was not a promising pupil, for I was so awfully afraid of the water. I was all right in the shallows where I could regain my footing, but when taken out beyond my depth I became an abject coward, and when the swimming master would let go his hold, I would flounder and struggle, and sink of course. There is a point with me where cowardice ceases to be a virtue, and one day I reached that point. Turning upon my patient teacher, I said: "Please take me way out into deep water. I want to dive." Dive, lady? Dive? Why, you can't swim, or even float," said he, gasping with astonishment. "Yes, dive! That is exactly what I am going to do." He looked a little incredulous, but we walked to the end of the spring board. Taking a tragic pose, I said: "Now, my good fellow, you have tried to teach me to swim and I can not learn because I am so afraid of that horrible water. Now, you needn't tell me how to dive scientifically, for I am too scared to pay the least attention, and if I did, I could not control my muscles in the least, so it's no use for you to say a word. I am going to count ten, and then—No, I'll count twenty—and then!"

I counted twenty very, very slowly indeed, and then—down, down, down I went until it seemed as though I should never stop. I shut my eyes tight so I couldn't see sharks and things, and—but how was this? When did I stop going down and start to go up? What had I done to take me up? If I had made an effort, it was wholly unconscious and instinctive. Anyhow, there I was back again on the surface, and old ocean had not swallowed me up after all. It had gurgled in my ears that it didn't want me for its prey and had thrown me back into the air where I belonged.

"Bravo," sang out the swimming master. "I really didn't think you'd do it; but you're all right now. No trouble about you swimming."

It was very exhilarating, playing and splashing about in the water without the least fear of its dragging me under. And, dear friends, experience has taught me ever since that if we take a header into what we fear we will rise and play on the surface of circumstance.

But do not force yourself to do anything that you fear. Count ten, or twenty, if you will, not in seconds, but in days, months, or years if need be, before you make the plunge. In the meantime cosmic forces are at work within, getting you ready. When the time is ripe you will feel that you want to take the header. You will then take it nobly, and come up rosy and smiling.

"Ah, but, madam, you say nothing of the undertow. Suppose that catches you?" says my pessimistic friend who is always ready to cap the extinguisher on my enthusiasm.

Undertow? What undertow? Who's afraid of undertow? It can't catch us of the New Thought. We overtoe the undertow.

My pessimistic friend thinks me full of unreason, but I call it a glorious unreason, allied to the truest logic.

Think Beautiful Thoughts.

Think beautiful thoughts and set them adrift
 On eternity's boundless sea!
 Let their burdens be pure, let their white sails lift,
 And bear away from you the comforting gift
 Of your heart-felt sympathy.

For a beautiful thought is a beautiful thing,
 And out on the infinite tide
 May meet, and touch, and tenderly bring
 To the sick and the weary and the sorrowing
 A solace so long denied.

And a soul that hath buffeted every wave
 Adversity's sea hath known,
 So weak, so worn, so despairing, grows brave
 With that beautiful thought to succor and save—
 The thought, it has made its own.

And the dull earth-senses shall hear its cry,
 And the dull eyes see its gleam,
 And the ship-wrecked hearts, as they wander by
 Shall catch at its promise and straightway try
 To wake from their dismal dream.

And radiant now as a heavenly star,
 It grows with its added good,
 Till over the waters the light gleams far
 To where the desolate places are,
 And its lessons are understood.

And glad are the eyes that behold the ray,
 And glad are the ears that hear
 The message your sweet thought has to say
 To the sorrowing souls along the way,
 Who needed its word of cheer.

So think good thoughts, and set them adrift
 On eternity's boundless sea;
 Let their burdens be pure, let the white sails lift
 And bear away from you the comforting gift
 Of your heartfelt sympathy!

Mental Healing Made Plain.

By Kate Atkinson Boehme.

LESSON IV.

IN my last lesson I said something of the subconscious mind and its processes. In this lesson I wish to say more about it, for it is a most important factor in the production or cure of disease. To most people the term "subconscious mind" conveys but scant meaning, and even psychologists know very little about it, but we know, or at least a little reflection will lead us to the conclusion, that there are mental activities which seem to be carried on without direct volition, or any consciousness that they are occurring.

When you were a little child, just learning to walk, you had to balance yourself very carefully on one foot while you lifted the other and took a step forward. Sometimes you did not succeed in maintaining your balance, but after many trials it became easier and soon you were able to walk, but even then you could not run, or play leap frog. Those were later accomplishments. The first effort in walking led up to these later efforts. In the meantime the first effort had become a habit, a something which could be done without constant care and supervision.

Now you can walk and think about something else all the time. If every day you go to business by the same route, after a while you will not need to think about your course, for you will turn corners unconsciously, and finally bring up at your office, hardly knowing how you got there. Possibly you may have been deep in thought all the while. Your walking, as mere muscular activity, was subconscious, and that which sent your steps in one direction was also subconscious.

Life is made up of these subconscious activities. They start in the conscious mind and pass thence to the subconscious. Prof. James, of Harvard, in his *Psychology*, says something to the effect that art would be impossible were it not for these subconscious processes. And you can see for yourself that this is so, for if the mind had always to busy itself with every detail in art which at first it apprehends with care and precision, there would never be free, bold strokes, or graceful outlines. All would be cramped and labored, like the writing of a child. The free sweep comes from the earlier detail.

And what is true of the subconscious in the study of art is true of it in all study, even in the study of bettering our physical and mental states.

This brings me to what I have to say. I want to show you as simply as I can how it is that thoughts of health produce health and thoughts of success produce success. I mean holding in mind a thought in the form of an affirmation.

For instance, in our Success Centre, which is composed of those among my subscribers who believe with me that man has his centre

in Divinity, and continually radiates from that centre, we express our belief in this formula:

"I am open on my inner side to the inexhaustible ocean of Divine Love and Power. I flow forth from it and am one with it. All success is mine through the working of this Power. I shall succeed in all my undertakings."

Now, what is the advantage in holding this in thought day after day and month after month, for I shall not change the formula until January next? What, I ask, is the advantage? And what does it mean? Is it a sort of hocus-pocus, magic or witchcraft?

I will tell you what it is—A simple, healthy, hearty and perfectly natural observance of a law of mind, the law which I have just been trying to explain, the law by which a thought held persistently in the conscious mind ultimately descends into the subconscious area and sets up an activity there.

In my early study of the piano I was an impatient pupil. I could not understand why I was kept on scale and arpeggio when I thought I could learn to execute them just as well by taking them as they occurred in a piece of music. My teacher knew better, and he said—You must make these things a habit so that you execute them unconsciously, for after a time, when you have other things to consider, you can not, at the same time, give your thought to technique in detail. Later I saw the necessity for this, but I could not understand at the time.

If you wish to be healthy and carry about with you the magnetic aura of sweetness, goodness and power—in other words, if you wish to be a "radiant success" shining with the joy of accomplishment—you must hold in mind the thoughts that make such attainment possible. A fleeting thought will have but little effect in converting you into the ideal that you would be, but a thought held, and held, and held, in time becomes a part of the living you. If the thought is true and noble the subconscious mind moves to the measure of truth and nobility. If the thought is crafty and mean, the subconscious mind moves to that measure. As it moves it keeps registering its processes in the glance of your eye, the turn of your head, the movement of your hand, the tone of your voice, and in many another form of your expression.

At the same time the subconscious mind is creating your physical conditions to the measure of your thought. It does this so silently, so secretly that you have no idea of what it is doing. You will understand better how this can be when you realize that you can pursue a long train of thought and be so absorbed in it that you will not be conscious of yourself as thinking. That consciousness will dawn upon you when you "come to yourself," when you get to the end of the train of thought. You were working all the time, and that work was in the mind, still the mind was not conscious of its own work going on within.

It is in something such a way that the subconscious mind pursues its activities without our cognizance. It is also far-reaching and extends beyond the bounds we have set for it in our ignorance. It reaches out and works for our good or ill, according to the nature of the thought which we have set in operation.

And now let us see how it is that the formula used in our "Success

Centre" can be of use in bringing about more satisfactory states of mind, body and surroundings.

In the first place we say: "I am open on my inner side to the inexhaustible ocean of Divine Love and Power. I am one with it, and flow forth from it." This affirms that limitations are swept away, that man is no longer to be considered as a little, separate something, made just so big and no bigger, created once upon a time and not to be re-created. It means instead that man is a flowing life, always flowing forth from the great Eternal. It means that he can be re-created every day, every moment. It means that as the ocean of Divine Power is inexhaustible, man's life or power is the same. This affirmation takes the mind out of the old sense of limitation into a new sense of freedom. It makes one breathe more freely and realize his own boundless possibilities.

To affirm it once or twice will not change mental habits fully, but to affirm it day after day and month after month makes the mind all over new. The subconscious mind then takes hold of the new habit of thought and weaves it into every tissue. Change and improvement is wrought everywhere throughout the body. Not only that, but the subconscious mind, which works, as I have said, in broad areas of which the conscious mind knows nothing, begins to reach out and open doors and make opportunities so that the unfolding self may have room for expression. When the sense of limitation is gone the germ of power within the human soul is ready to push out and make itself known and felt in the world of externals. The conscious mind plants the seed (of affirmation) in the soil of the subconscious, and there it develops. The seed is the thought of freedom, of constantly renewing life, and the seed brings forth that which is like itself.

Then the formula goes on to affirm: "All success is mine through the working of this Power. I shall succeed in all my undertakings."

This hardly needs an explanation, for it follows that if man is constantly flowing forth in a stream of life and power he must have success in whatever he undertakes. As I have often said—to be here at all, just to live, means success. So far as it goes, even though it may not be very far, it is achievement. It may be a negative sort of success just as 20 degrees Fahrenheit is not 60, and yet the 20 is not Zero.

There are some strange laws of mind which we are just beginning to know something about. One of these laws is—We can be what we wish to be—and another—We become what we wish to be by affirming that we are it already.

That last statement seems to contradict itself, does it not? How can one wish to be that which he is already, or how can one be already that which he wishes to be?

Self-contradictory on the face of it, but not so when you get at the real meaning. The "what you are" refers to your potential or unexpressed self, while the "what you wish to be" refers to the actual or expressed self.

You have it in you to be great in some walk in life, in some special calling, something for which you are peculiarly fitted, and you have it all in you now, rolled up like a bud waiting to be unfolded. That is

"what you are." The unfolding of the bud into the flower is—"what you wish to be." Is not that clear enough?

So you can affirm in perfect truth that you are what you wish to be, and this affirmation acts just as the sun does on the seed buried in the earth. The sun calls it to come forth, and it comes, not as the brown seed does it come, but as a new creature.

You can go on building and rebuilding yourself into new and varied life, by the power of affirmation, to the highest measure of your ideals. Then take heart, for the remedy for all your ills lies within you, and in you, because you are in God.

Extracts from Recent Letters.

I am getting well so fast, and my boy is doing better now. I feel so strong since I came to you for help.

E. E. W.

Am glad to say the piles are greatly relieved, and I feel much better in every way.

(Two weeks later.)

Piles all gone. I feel as though I had never had them, although they have troubled me for nine years.

R. G. McD.

My Dear Kate Boehme:

I think your treatments have helped me to a wonderful success. I went to the State Press Meeting at Glenn Springs with no reason to think I'd be given a showing, but with the vigor of expectancy well alive in my mind; and lo, I was crowned with honors and opportunities. Not being on the program for a word, I yet was invited to read an original poem on the "Yellowstone Park's Golden Gate," and also took the place of the most distinguished toaster, General Stoppelbein, at the banquet, and responded to the toastman with splendid eclat. Last, but not least, I was invited to make a political speech at the final meeting, did so, and was assured by numbers of people that I excelled all the men speakers.

I am, lovingly yours,

VIRGINIA DURANT YOUNG,
Editor Fairfax Enterprise, Fairfax, S. C.

A Splendid Investment.

A great many have written asking all about this investment, to all of whom we gladly made answer. Very many have invested and others are preparing to do so. I recommend it in the spirit of helpfulness, because I desire to see my subscribers prosper and for those with small means this is a fine opportunity in which their money can be multiplied many times. Stock is going up rapidly, so it is advisable to make an early inquiry. Address, as before, Kate A. Boehme, 2016 O St. N. W., Washington, D. C.

Special Notices.

Join Our Success Centre and Become "A Radiant Success."

William B. Moyle wishes to tell you of something which promotes health and induces longevity. He says, "I will live cleanly as a nobleman should," and he wants you to do the same. Write and ask him what he has to suggest. I am sure it will be highly beneficial, for I have faith in Mr. Moyle. If he suggests a material aid, do not scorn it. You take baths, do you not? They involve a material application of water. Well, a word to the wise is sufficient. Mr. Moyle's address is 117-119 West Ohio St., Allegheny, Pa. See advertisement in another column.

It always gives me pleasure to recommend William Towne to my readers, for I know he will treat my subscribers as he treats every one, with the strictest honor and business promptitude. He can send you any book you want. Mr. Towne's address is Holyoke, Mass.

Just received a bright and interesting New Thought publication called "The Century." It came all the way from Adelaide, South Australia, where it is published.

Colonel O. C. Sabin, the great leader of the Reform Christian Science movement, has just sent me his new book entitled "Christology." I have not had time to go through its three hundred pages, but have no doubt the book is as good and helpful as the Colonel himself. I know Colonel Sabin and his wife and they are delightful people. Both are radiating points of health and happiness, and both are devoted to their work, that of healing the sick, and most successful in it. You can order "Christology" of the Washington News Letter Publishing Company, 512 Tenth Street N. W., Washington, D. C. Price \$2.

The Law of Dealing with Men.

This is from Tolstoy's "Resurrection:"

"Men think there are circumstances when one may deal with human beings without love; and there are no such circumstances. One may deal with things without love; one may cut down trees, make bricks, hammer iron without love; but you can not deal with men without it, just as men can not deal with bees without being careful. If you deal carelessly with bees you will injure them, and will yourself be injured. And so with men. It can not be otherwise, because natural love is the fundamental law of human life. It is true that a man can not force another to love him, as he can force him to work for him; but it does not follow that a man may deal with men without love, especially to demand anything from them."

“A Little Off.”

Kate A. Boehme, in Freedom.

ONE who has even cursorily scanned the nature and origin of slang will be convinced of its oft-time advantage over more cultured and elegant speech.

The Century Dictionary, while unable to trace the rather obscure origin of the word “slang,” suggests a connection with the verb “sling,” indicating directness, a shot, a facility in hitting the mark. And who shall say that some of our slang phrases are not very good English, good Anglo-Saxon, lacking the differentiation of the Norman-French ’tis true, but all-sufficient to define the basic elements of life, which are pure and simple.

Let us look at the phrase “a little off.” Does it contain any inherent crudeness, or vulgarity? Is it not through association or misapplication, that it has fallen into degenerate usage? It is more than probable that the phrase originated in an apt perception of the analogy existing between mental and physical conditions. Some one doubtless observed that a certain object was not self-centered, was “off its base,” as it were, and by a natural analogy, the term was subsequently applied to a mind which was not self-centered, which lacked concentration, or the power to focus upon a central point.

Concentration is the very essence of individualization, from atom to man, hence an element of force in all physical and mental processes. If man did not possess this power in some degree, he would not be. To possess it in greater degree, is to possess greater being.

When an object is not self-centered, it is in process of degeneration or disintegration, and this is as true of the mind as of any other object; therefore there may be some truth in what Max Nordau says of the degeneracy of the race; for observe the average man and see whether the power of concentration be not almost wholly undeveloped within him. Indeed, one can not be said to be wholly sane who is afflicted with this mental aberration, this continual flying off at a tangent, wherein one never comes into that vital living relationship with one’s environment, which distinguishes the sane from the insane.

There is, however, one form of insanity, known as monomania, in which there is great concentration, but this does not invalidate the foregoing argument, because the monomaniac, by concentrating continually upon one idea, falls out of vibration with his environment as a whole, and in a well-balanced mentality, the law of diversity must be observed as well as the law of concentration.

Herbert Spencer defines death as a failure to respond to environment. According to this, the uncentered human being can not be wholly alive, for he does not come into electric contact with humanity, but is always “a little off,” and thus misses that vital touch, which is so productive of vitality.

Even Emerson, great as he was, recognized at times this diffusive condition; as, for instance, when he said, “I would put myself in the attitude to look in the eye, an abstract truth, and I can not. I blench,

and withdraw, on this side, and on that." While Emerson encountered this difficulty in his contemplation of the abstract the average man blanches and withdraws his attention in like manner from the concrete.

This condition is lamentable, but not without its remedy. If our schools for physical culture can render muscles more tense, surely those for mental culture should evolve methods for tensing the mental fiber. But in the absence of better appliances, some simple devices may serve to construct the lower rounds in the ladder by which to climb from this quagmire of intellectual decay; as, for instance, a short daily effort to hold the attention closely to some object for a short space of time.

Prentice Mulford has illustrated the difficulty of this process in his very amusing book, "The Swamp Angel." One day in his little hermitage, which he constructed in a Jersey swamp, he had a fit of the blues. He recognized the fact that his mind was running in a gloomy rut, and that the only remedy was to throw himself bodily into some occupation upon which he could center his attention strongly enough to draw himself out of the rut.

In his own words, "A mentor within me came to my assistance and said, 'Take that wheelbarrow, and wheel it carefully to the wood shed. Wheel it through the stubble field so as to expend the least possible labor in the wheeling. Wheel it so as to avoid holes and rocks and miry places. Put your whole mind on the barrow, and when you get to the wood shed, pile it very carefully with wood. Pile the sticks nicely, so they will not fall off. Pile them with attention, precision and daintiness. Then wheel the barrow back to the house with the same care. Carry the wood into the house; don't fling it down by the stove as you would fling a snake off your person, but put all your mind on piling, so as to make a creditable pile, and see then if a part, at least, of your horrors is not cast out of you.'

"I wheeled the barrow a short distance. Made a game of it in getting the greatest amount of go out of the vehicle with the least amount of push, avoided ruts, stones and the deepest hollows. I did feel somewhat lighter. I seemed to be wheeling it out of Hades. But all at once, involuntarily, I relaxed my vigilance in fixing my mind on the barrow. I ran it in a rut—two ruts. The barrow in one, my thoughts in another. That old gloomy rut of recollection and anticipation; 'The bright days of yore that would never come back,' the 'What's the use of living, anyway?' the 'What's it all for?' the 'Fleeting years and the growing old,' the 'Ah me!' and the 'Heigh ho!' and 'Such is life!'

" 'There you go,' said my monitor, 'off in the rut again.'

"I put my mind on the work again, and wheeled about half a dozen steps. Then my pet grievance got into the barrow, I forgot the wheeling. The pet grievance thus worked on my mind, 'If so-and-so hadn't said this and that, I know I was partly wrong, but, by George! I never went so far as to say, or to think, or to do—' 'You're off again,' said the adviser, 'you're not attending to that barrow.'

"I buckled to the barrow. 'Gracious,' went my mind, 'can't I put this mind of mine on one particular thing for ten seconds? What a weak thing it is to be forever slipping off the work right in hand.'

“‘You’re off in another rut,’ said my monitor, ‘think of the work and not of your mind’s weakness.’ ‘I was thinking how much truth there is in what you say,’ I remarked.

“The reply was, ‘Don’t think even of that. Think of nothing but the barrow. Stick to the barrow. Work at the barrow. Work out the salvation of the hour and the minute on that barrow.’”

And so on. I believe the chronicle has it that Prentice, in the first experiment, did not succeed in concentrating on the barrow, but that he gained a belief in its curative properties, if long enough persisted in. And so I have quoted the incident at some length, in order to show that in the environment of each one of us there must exist many opportunities for the practice of concentration.

In this connection, let me suggest that one might utilize some otherwise unavailable material, even the “demon on dates” or the “detail friend” as a difficult object upon which to concentrate. Knowing that in the event of accomplishing so great an achievement, he need not fear being enumerated among those who are “a little off.”

The Tone of Voice.

*It is not so much what you say
As the manner in which you say it;
It is not so much the language you use
As the tones in which you convey it.*

*The Words may be mild and fair,
And the Tones may pierce like a dart;
The words may be soft as the summer air,
And the tones may break the heart.*

*For words but come from the mind,
And grow by study and art;
But the tones leap forth from the inner self,
And reveal the state of the heart.*

*Whether you know it or not—
Whether you mean or care—
Gentleness, kindness, love and hate,
Envy and anger are there.*

*Then, would you quarrels avoid
And in peace and love rejoice,
Keep anger not only out of your words
But keep it out of your voice.*

—The Youth's Companion.

Self-Appreciation.

"Do you know, my dear sir, what I like best in your letter? The egotism for which you thought necessary to apologize. I am a rogue at egotism myself; and, to be plain, I have rarely or never liked a man who was not. The first step to discovering the beauties of God's universe is a (perhaps partial) apprehension of such of them as adorn our own characters. When I see a man who does not think pretty well of himself, I always suspect him of being in the right. And besides if he does not like himself, whom he has seen, how is he ever to like one whom he can never see but in dim and artificial presentment?"

This is an extract from one of Robert Louis Stevenson's letters, and it suggests the fact that self-appreciation is entirely distinct from vanity and conceit. Stevenson was the most modest of men. He disliked the notoriety and publicity that are inseparable from literary fame; but he appreciated his own powers; he liked to see other people appreciate theirs, and he was ever ready to help them to such appreciation by cordial praise of their good work.

Vanity and conceit are the marks of the little mind, but wholesome self-appreciation always accompanies greatness. Self-appreciation is the foundation of all success, because self-appreciation comes from a knowledge of man's nature and powers. The man who believes he is a fallen creature, a vile sinner, a wretch undone, a worm of the dust, will be pretty certain to crawl and fall and get undone and do vile deeds. The man who knows himself as a god in embryo is bound to appreciate himself, and thus develop his own powers and make life something worth living. Centuries before Christ said to men, "Ye are gods," the grand old heathen Marcus Aurelius said, "The soul is a god in exile." Here and there in every age men have arisen to tell their fellow-men man's true rank in the universe; and the men who have the consciousness of their own worth and innate divinity are the ones who have left their impress on the world and won earthly immortality.

Education means the drawing out of one's latent powers. And the first lesson in the beginning of education should be this statement, or something like it: "You have unknown powers and capacities to be evolved." The child should hear this as soon as he is able to take in its meaning; and from infancy to maturity he should have constantly before him "the vision splendid" of that which he may become, if he will only recognize himself "a god in exile." But where is the parent or the teacher who trains the child on these lines? As soon as a child is old enough to understand language, he begins to hear from his religious teachers that he is a child of wrath, a fallen creature, shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, and under the wrath and curse of God. If he is stupid no one hesitates to impress the fact on him on every suitable occasion; if he is ugly he is never allowed to forget the humiliating fact, and all his faults of character are paraded before him constantly. If he is well favored in person and character he must be kept in ignorance of the facts lest he become vain. Does anyone mention the child's beautiful hair or eyes, at once the mother or the grandmother brings out that doleful old maxim, "Pretty is as pretty does," or "Beauty is

but skin deep," and the child receives into his mind the seed thought of the worthlessness of bodily beauty, which sprouts, grows and finally ripens into old age, ugliness and death.

"You will ruin that child," said an orthodox father to his wife who was telling their little girl how sweet and pretty she was.

"Children are not ruined that way," was the mother's reply. "I want my children to appreciate themselves, for self-appreciation is the only thing that compels the appreciation of others."

If every mother had such wisdom there would be fewer wrecks of womanhood. The key-note of the "woman movement" is self-appreciation. Woman is learning to value herself at something like her true worth, and man has to accept her valuation of herself instead of his valuation of her. The girl who is taught to look upon her beauty and her mental capacity as valuable gifts, will not degenerate into a kitchen drudge, a seamstress and a housekeeper. She will "take care of herself" in every sense of the phrase, and retain her health and beauty—indeed, let us hope. "It is a good thing for a girl to be told that she is beautiful," said a shrewd man of the world; "for she is not likely then to marry the first young jackanapes who comes her way."

"That child looks very much like her aunt E.," remarked a visitor.

"Yes," said the child's father, "but she'll never make as fine a woman as her aunt E. was."

Do you suppose the little girl ever forgot that disparaging remark from her father's lips? Was there any encouragement, any inspiration, in such words to the childish soul? How much better would it have been if the father had said, "Yes, she does look like her aunt E., and I am sure she will make just as fine a woman as her aunt E. was." Words like these would have been like a beacon light through all coming years, and the child would have felt a solemn obligation to fulfill her father's high hopes for her. But how much of the incentive for striving is gone when no one has any hopes of you!

It is small wonder that the majority of people are so mediocre, when we are always making affirmations of mediocrity about ourselves and others, when we ought to be declaring our boundless possibilities of being, knowing and doing. There is a poem by Sam Walter Foss that ought to be put into the reading course of every school in the land; and if I were a member of an examining board and wanted to test a teacher's fitness for her position, I would ask her to interpret that poem and give its bearings on the education of a child. The poem is called "The Confessions of a Lunkhead." The speaker introduces himself as a lunkhead, and then compares himself with three other lunkheads:

Now, I knew I was a lunkhead; but them fellers didn't know—
Thought they wuz the bigges' pun'kins an' the purtiest in the row.
An' I, I uster laff an' say, "Them lunkhead chaps will see
Wen they go out into the worl' what gawky chaps they be."

Joe Craig he was a lunkhead, but it didn't get through his pate;
I guess you've all heerd tell of him—he's gov'nor of the State.
Jim Stump he blundered off to war—a most uncommon gump—
Didn't know enough to know it—an' he come home General Stump.

Then Hiram Underwood went off, the bigges' gawk of all;
We hardly thought him bright enough to share in Adam's fall;
But he tried the railroad business, an' he always grabbed his share.
Now, this gawk who didn't know it, is a fifty millionaire.

An' often out here hoein' I sit down atween the stalks,
 Thinkin' how we four together all was lummuxes and gawks.
 All was gumps an' all was lunkheads, only they didn't know, you see;
 An' I ask, "If I hadn't known it, where in natur' would I be?"

For I stayed to home and rastled in the cornfield like a chump,
 Cos I knew I was a lunkhead an' a lummux an' a gump;
 But if only I hadn't known it, like them other fellers there,
 To-day I might be settin' in the presidential chair.

We are all lunkheads—don't git mad—an' lummuxes an' gawks;
 But us poor chaps who know we be, we walks in humble walks;
 So I say to all good lunkheads, "Keep yer own selves in the dark;
 Don't own or reckernize the fact, and you will make your 'mark.'"

"We are all lunkheads"—as long as we think so, but if we choose to think otherwise of ourselves, there is no knowing what we may be. "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he."

Egotism is a normal state of mind; vanity is abnormal. One is wholesome, the other unwholesome. One leads to success and happiness, the other to failure and misery. The vain man sees himself great, and everybody else little; the healthy egotist, like Stevenson, sees his own greatness and the actual or the potential greatness of human being. Don't be afraid to cultivate self-appreciation in yourself and in everybody around you. The world is full of "might have beens"—people who might have been this, that and the other. wonderful thing, if only some one had told them of their latent possibilities, and roused them to an appreciation of themselves. Here is a man with the thoughtful face of a scholar and a student, but he is only a clerk who bends over a ledger all day; here is another who looks like a born leader of men, but he is only an insignificant part of the "common herd;" here are women with beauty, intellect and grace of manner that would adorn the court of a king, and they are wearing away their lives cooking and cleaning and patching old clothes—imprisoned, held down—not by their fathers and brothers and husbands, but by their own false estimate of themselves. It would be a very sad state of affairs but for the fact that life is eternal, and "we always may be what we might have been."

"What!" says some tired soul, "can I get back my youth, my beauty, my lost mental gifts, my enthusiasm, my hopes and my ambitions and the accomplishments of my girlhood? I used to play or sing or paint, and I always wanted to be an artist or a musician or something out of the ordinary run; but now it is too late."

"It is too late? Ah, nothing is too late,
 Till the tired heart shall cease to palpitate."

And even then it is not too late, for who knows but that the mind, the real self, makes for itself another palpitating heart and all other bodily organs, and moves straight on in any course it pleases to take? It is never too late for the man who knows his own powers, and who refuses to let himself be limited and crippled by the race thought of old age and "swift-coming death."

Appreciation, then, is a debt we owe to ourselves and to others. Suppose we begin to pay it up daily, hourly, and see if life will not become richer for us all. If some one bakes a good loaf of bread, or writes a fine essay, or makes a pretty calico dress, or paints a picture,

or plays a sonata, or trims a hat in a manner to merit admiration, let us be ready to express the admiration that is their due, and we will have the satisfaction of paying a just debt, and the doer of the good work will be richer in self-appreciation.—Lida Calvert Obenchain in Freedom.

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